

His teaching career began in 1966 while working on his doctoral degree, and since then, he has taught at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Dr. McFarland has published books, reviews and numerous articles dealing with twentieth century military history, and has also made professional presentations dealing with his discipline and graduate studies.

In 1969, Dr. McFarland became an Assistant Professor of History at East Texas State University. This position would pave the way for him to become President of the institution, which in 1996 became part of The Texas A&M University System as Texas A&M University-Commerce.

During Dr. McFarland's tenure, he was able to take Texas A&M University-Commerce to new academic heights—twenty new programs were introduced at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels. With enrollment at its highest point in 25 years, the university remains one of Texas' top producers of teachers, principals, superintendents, school counselors and educational diagnosticians. The MBA program is considered the number three best buy in the Nation.

In the past 4 years, administrative costs have dropped from 11½ percent to 9½ percent, while external gifts and research funding has increased by over 200 percent.

Passionate about improving a deteriorating physical plant, Dr. McFarland pushed for the first new Campus Master Plan in 40 years. In 2001, he began the first campus construction project since 1977. This project led to the demolition of forty-one defunct buildings, replacing them with modern and efficient classrooms and support facilities. Under construction today is the Sam Rayburn Student Center, named for one of my personal heroes.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to join the many graduates of Texas A&M University-Commerce, including my wife Mary Ellen, in congratulating Dr. McFarland upon his retirement. I can't think of a better testament to public service than educating tomorrow's leaders, and Dr. McFarland is to be commended for his commitment to the field of higher education. Please join me in honoring him on this prestigious occasion.

HONORING COMMANDER DANIEL K. BRIGGS FOR HIS CONTINUED SERVICE TO THE SONS OF AMVETS OF OHIO

HON. JIM JORDAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I am honored to commend to the House the distinguished service of Mr. Daniel K. Briggs to the Ohio Department of the Sons of AMVETS. A resident of Findlay, he will be recognized at a testimonial dinner this weekend for his outstanding work as Commander of the Ohio Department.

Born in Bucyrus, Ohio, Commander Briggs is a 1970 graduate of Bucyrus High School. His dedication to veterans' causes was evident from the start through his service to Bucyrus's Sons of the American Legion chapter.

Upon moving to Findlay in 1998, Commander Briggs continued this commitment to

our nation's veterans, joining Findlay's Sons of AMVETS squadron. He has held many offices in Findlay's Squadron 21—and continues in the position of First Vice Commander of the Findlay squadron even as he leads the state organization.

During his time as First Vice Commander of Ohio, six new squadrons were established in the state and Ohio membership increased to more than 8,000 sons, grandsons, brothers, and husbands of veterans.

Commander Briggs is a longtime employee of the General Electric plant in Bucyrus. Combining his work with his passion to give back to veterans, he started a program to donate light bulbs to veterans' homes and other veterans' organizations in Ohio. So many have benefited from the thousands of light bulbs donated through this program and the money saved as a result.

Commander Briggs has received numerous honors from his peers in the organization, including the 2006 Lifetime Achievement Award and the Gil Garza Award: the highest award bestowed by the Sons of AMVETS. His commitment to fulfilling needs at the Ohio Veterans Home in Sandusky garnered him the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Services Leadership Award two years ago.

I am honored to join the chorus of well-wishers as the State of Ohio again recognizes his distinguished service to Ohio's veterans. He is a shining example of our mutual responsibility to serve those who devoted their lives to protecting the freedoms we enjoy.

SÖDERTÄLJE, SWEDEN ACCEPTS 5,000 IRAQI REFUGEES

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, as Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Helsinki Commission, I rise today to recognize the generosity of the people of Södertälje, Sweden, who have opened their doors to more than 5,000 Iraqi refugees. This small city has a population of 83,000 and has accepted more Iraqi refugees than the United States and Canada combined.

On April 10, the Mayor of Södertälje, Mr. Anders Lago, testified at a Helsinki Commission hearing entitled, "OSCE Partner States and Neighbors Overwhelmed by Iraqi Refugees: Band-aid Solutions to Implosion in the Middle East?" In his testimony, Mayor Lago noted, "The millions of refugees in the world must be a concern for us all, not just for those areas bordering on the breeding grounds of war, or for a small number of countries and cities such as Södertälje." In addition, he said, "Despite the fact that we need immigrants, Södertälje has become a town that must now say—STOP, STOP, STOP. Do not misunderstand me. We will always help others when we can. We must act when the lives of our brothers and sisters are in danger. It is imperative that we have a humane refugee policy world wide. Our common agreement that all people are equal, no matter what color, religion or gender, must become a reality."

Madam Speaker, the country of Sweden has accepted more than 30,000 Iraqi refugees

since 2003. This is no doubt a commendable act of humanitarian kindness. I offer my heartfelt thanks and deep appreciation to the government of Sweden which is truly committed to assisting Iraqi refugees.

It must also be noted that, while Mayor Lago has opened the doors of his small city to so many Iraqi refugees, the strains on its infrastructure have been tremendous. Nonetheless, his generosity, and that of the people of Södertälje, put the United States to shame. The Mayor has clearly gone above and beyond the call of duty to help refugees from Iraq and he is nothing short of a "humanitarian ambassador."

Madam Speaker. I thank Mayor Anders Lago and the people of Södertälje, Sweden for their kindness and generosity, and I submit the Mayor's statement for inclusion in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

TESTIMONY OF ANDERS LAGO—MAYOR OF SÖDERTÄLJE MUNICIPALITY AND CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BEFORE HELSINKI COMMISSION, APRIL 10, 2008

Chairman Hastings, Members of the Congressional Commission, Distinguished Speakers and Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost I would like to thank the Commission for your invitation. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you about the difficult situation regarding the people now fleeing from Iraq.

Allow me to be totally frank. I am not the President, a Cabinet Minister, an Ambassador or even a Member of the Swedish Parliament. I am the Mayor of Södertälje, a small town with slightly more than eighty thousand inhabitants. I am here today as the representative from a small country on the northern edge of the European Union, but I can say with both pride and disappointment, that when it comes to refugees, I come from a great nation. The United States is the country in the western world that accepts the largest number of refugees. Directly thereafter comes Sweden, and according to census statistics, it is my hometown that receives most refugees in Sweden.

Many Iraqi refugees have sought shelter in Södertälje since the start of the war in Iraq. Almost all belong to the Christian minority. Södertälje accepts approximately five percent of all the Iraqi refugees who come to Europe. To illustrate this even more dramatically, my little town alone, receives more Iraqi refugees than the United States and Canada together.

We did not start the war in Iraq, however we assume a huge responsibility for those people who are affected.

Last week I met with seven Iraqi pupils at a local school. Meena, a girl in fifth grade, had a tear in her eye when she said "It is nice here in Sweden, but I miss my father." Her father is still in Iraq. Another little girl, Meryem, said with an edge to her voice, "If the war continues, the doors must be open for the refugees." All the children I met have relatives left in Iraq. And those children live in homes tormented with fear.

When I asked these children what they wanted to be when they are older, they brightened up and competed with one another to tell me. Renza wanted to become an artist. Steve wanted to become a policeman. Meena said shyly that she wanted to be a doctor. These children, in spite of all they have been through, have not let circumstances diminish their ability to dream of the future.

In Södertälje we face three problems. Firstly our schools and preschools are full; of the town's eight thousand pupils, five hundred are enrolled in the special preparation

classes we have for newly arrived refugees. We can not hire teachers or build schools fast enough to give all these, often highly motivated pupils a good start in their new country.

Secondly there is a lack of living accommodation. A great many of the refugees lodge with relatives or friends. We know of cases of fifteen people sleeping on mattresses in a two room apartment.

And last but not least we have a shortage of job opportunities. A small town can not possibly produce jobs for a thousand refugees each year. Here the United States could really help Södertälje. American companies looking to set up businesses or expand in Europe, are most welcome to visit my home town. We need all the job opportunities we can get.

I am in awe of the refugees' ambition and will to make new lives for themselves. Many of those who come to our town are well educated and motivated to start a new life in a new country. We need immigrants if we are to manage the demographic challenges we face, as the number of aging citizens in the western world rises.

Despite the fact that we need immigrants, Södertälje has become a town that must now say—STOP, STOP, STOP! Do not misunderstand me. We will always help others when we can. We must act when the lives of our brothers and sisters—are in danger. It is imperative—that we have a humane refugee policy world wide. Our common agreement, that all people are equal, no matter what color religion or gender must become a reality.

The millions of refugees in the world must be a concern for us all, not just for those areas bordering on the breeding grounds of war, or for a small number of countries and cities such as Södertälje.

Södertälje works hard to spread the reception of refugees equally over the whole of Sweden, to all cities and towns. Internationally, we must find a model for an equal and more responsible reception of refugees. We must also have special support for the refugees on site in Iraq, in Jordan and in Syria. Most of all, we must put an end to this and other ongoing wars.

The children I met last week have cousins and friends who are left behind in Iraq. Those children are trying to lead a normal childhood in a land where uneasiness and fear are always present.

I am not a President; I am not an Ambassador; but I know that we must create a new future for the children fleeing from war.

And I know there is no time to lose.

Thank you for your attention.

COMMENDING BILL AND PEGGY ZACK FOR DEVOTION TO THE POCKET FLAGS PROJECT

HON. STEVAN PEARCE

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Mr. PEARCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the patriotism and dedication of Bill and Peggy Zack. These two New Mexico residents have fully devoted their time and money to lifting the spirits of our troops deployed in Iraq.

Mr. and Mrs. Zack began the Pocket flag project in 2002 and have since sent out over 70,000 pocket flags. The pocket flags are small folded American flags that are enclosed with a message. On a small piece of paper reads "A flag for your pocket so you can al-

ways carry a little piece of home. We are praying for you. Thank you for defending our freedom." A heartfelt message that is sure to lift the spirits of our service men and women. Pocket flags have been sent to the 647 Support Group at Fort Bliss, Texas and all National Guard and special units being deployed through Ft. Bliss. Additional receipts of these flags include the Mountain Brigade in Fort Drum, NY and the AYN of the Alabama National Guard. The list goes on.

It should also be noted that Bill and Peggy don't accept any donations to help them with materials and shipping expenses. In fact the cost of shipping all 70,000 pocket flags has summed up to about \$10,000 and over 7,000 hours. The only reimbursement the Zacks will accept are the letters written by soldiers currently deployed. While the letters vary, most say how thankful they are for Bill and Peggy taking the time to send them a little piece of home.

It is inspiring to know that citizens like Bill and Peggy Zack are trying to do all they can to lift the morale of our troops. On behalf of all servicemen and women I would like to thank Bill and Peggy Zack for all their efforts to comfort the troops in the Middle East.

JULIA M. CARSON POST OFFICE BUILDING

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 9, 2008

Mr. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5489 which designates the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6892 Main Street in Gloucester, Virginia, as the "Congresswoman Jo Ann S. Davis Post Office."

Congresswoman Davis was the second woman and first Republican woman in Virginia's congressional delegation. She came from humble beginnings and rose to become a successful business woman before being elected to the Virginia General Assembly in 1997.

I came to know Congresswoman Davis personally over the years since we first arrived to Congress together in 2001. She was a wonderful woman with whom I was honored to serve. We shared a strong commitment to ensuring that military families and veterans receive the care and compensation they deserve. I will always remember and admire Jo Ann for her strength during her courageous fights with breast cancer.

Madam Speaker, today I have the privilege in joining my colleagues in honoring this distinguished woman and good friend by designating the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6892 Main Street in Gloucester, Virginia, as the "Congresswoman Jo Ann S. Davis Post Office."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Mr. ANDREWS. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained from voting on April 14,

2008. Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on the following rollcall votes: rollcall 183, rollcall 184, and rollcall 185.

TRIBUTE TO THE 125TH BIRTHDAY OF GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO

HON. JOHN T. SALAZAR

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Mr. SALAZAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the occasion of Mesa County's 125th birthday. I would like to express my appreciation of this unique, diverse and vibrant county and all its citizens.

Since before the county was founded in the 1880's, the area's history has been remarkable. Dinosaurs that roamed this area left behind their tracks and bones to tantalize historians and geologists. The advent of the main line of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroads through this valley in 1887 brought the prospect of "civilization." The foresight of the founding fathers to build a major irrigation system, still used today, has helped create some of the best fruit crops in the country. As a farmer, I appreciate the importance of agriculture and the tremendous value it imparts to a community.

Mesa County is also a national leader in many industries and fields. Mesa County residents helped develop the New Deal, worked on the Manhattan Project and served in Congress.

The area is also blessed with a variety of natural resources, including uranium, natural gas and oil shale. In the 1980's the shale-dependent economy crashed after the withdrawal of Exxon Mobile, but with its typical determination, Mesa County is now a thriving economic power. In 2008, Mesa County was named the 9th fastest growing area in the country, a tribute to the resiliency and strength of this county.

On the 125th birthday of Mesa County, we pay tribute to a special area that embodies the best of Colorado. Its blend of rural and urban life has enhanced the life of its citizens. The past and traditions of this special place on the Western Slope are worth celebrating. It is an honor and a privilege to represent Mesa County as it commemorates its 125th birthday.

VIRGINIA TECH

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, one year ago, the idyllic calm of campus life at Virginia Tech, and everywhere in America, was shattered forever. We mark this somber occasion in solemn memory of those too soon taken from us, and in prayerful sympathy with their still-grieving families and friends. Part of our State's future was lost that day. Immeasurable potential abruptly and cruelly cut short. Remembering hurts, but forgetting would be unforgivable.

It falls to us to make some sense of unthinkable tragedy and do our best, in their honor, to build the world they could only envision